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April 19, 2011

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KENYANS CLAIM VICTORY IN BOSTON MARATHON
Ambassador Odembo praises runners for their achievement

BOSTON – Kenyans Geoffrey Mutai and Caroline Kilel yesterday won the men's and women's divisions at the Boston Marathon, adding two more triumphs to Kenya's long list of victories at the prestigious race.

Mutai set a new world record after completing the 26.2 mile marathon in two hours, three minutes and two seconds. Fellow Kenyan Moses Mosop finished at a close second in two hours, three minutes and six seconds. Kilel finished first in the women's race, clocking in at two hours, 22 minutes and 36 seconds. Kenyan Sharon Cherop came in third at two hours, 22 minutes and 42 seconds.



Ambassador Elkanah Odembo greets champion Geoffrey Mutai at the finish line.
Photo: Elise Amendola/AP

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Kenyan Ambassador to the United States Elkanah Odembo offered his congratulations to the champions.

"I feel a great deal of pride for my country today," said Ambassador Odembo after the race. "Completing the Boston Marathon, let alone winning the race, is a significant accomplishment. The number of times a Kenyan has won is a true testament to the spirit of the Kenyan people. Both Geoffrey Mutai and Caroline Kilel represented Kenya well today."

"I would like to extend my thanks to the people of Boston and the Marathon's organizers for their hospitality," the Ambassador added.

Since Ibrahim Hussein claimed Kenya's first victory in the Marathon in 1988, 27 Kenyan men and women have won the race. Mutai is the 19th Kenyan man to win the Men's Open since 1988. Kilel is the eighth Kenyan woman to win the Women's Open since 2000.

In 2010, Kenyan runner Robert Kiprono Cheruiyot won the men's race for a record-setting fifth time and set a course record, which Mutai yesterday shattered, of two hours, five minutes and 52 seconds.

Catherine Ndereba holds the record for the most victories in the women's division after winning the race four times in six years. In 2002, Margaret Okayo set the course record for the women's race at two hours, 20 minutes and 43 seconds.

Last weekend, Kenyan men and women finished first in both the Paris Marathon and the Rotterdam Marathon. Benjamin Kiptoo won the Paris Marathon, clocking two hours, six minutes, 31 seconds and Priscah Jeptoo also won the women's marathon. In the Rotterdam Marathon, Wilson Chebet outpaced fellow Kenyan Vincent Kipruto, finishing in two hours, five minutes, 27 seconds while Philes Ongori won the women's race.

On Sunday, Kenyan Emmanuel Mutai won the men's London Marathon in a course record time of two hours, four minutes and 40 seconds. Martin Lel of Kenya was second, with Kenya's Patrick Makau finishing in third. Mary Keitany won the women's marathon.

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